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At the request of the Senate Subcommittee on Education an inquiry was conducted as a joint effort of the Department of Interior and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to determine whether responsibility for Indian education should continue to reside with the Bureau of Indian Affairs or be transfered to the Office of Education. The conclusions indicated that the educational function should remain with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but with the close cooperation of the Office of Education to ensure the upgrading of existing educational programs. (DK)

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QUALITY EDUCATION FOR AMERICAN INDIANS, A REPORT ON ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION

PREPARED FOR THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE

UNITED STATES SENATE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The following report was requested by the Education Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare during the 1967 hearings on amendments to Public Law 89–10, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, from both the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Department of the Interior.

The report will be reviewed by the subcommittee in connection with hearings on S. 1125, the Elementary and Secondary Amendments Act of 1967, as the subcommittee considers the further inclusion within Public Law 89–10 of provisions relating to grants to schools servicing the needs of our Indian children.

It is our hope that the report will also be of interest to Senators and to members of the educational community. On behalf of the subcommittee, I express to the Cochairmen of the Interdepartmental Committee, Mr. Robert E. Vaughn, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Land Management, U.S. Department of Interior, and Dr. Joseph G. Colmen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and their associates of both agencies, our appreciation for their work in connection with this report.

WAYNE MORSE,
Chairman, Education Subcommittee,
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE,
Washington, May 11, 1967.

Hon. WAYNE MORSE,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Education,
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MORSE: During the hearing last April on the proposed amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, a question was posed by Senator Fannin and yourself as to whether the responsibility for the education of Indian children should be transferred to the Office of Education in HEW or remain with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We agreed at that time that a joint inquiry into the question would be conducted.

We are pleased to transmit herewith for your consideration a report of our findings and conclusions.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. GARDNER,
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

STEWART L. UDALL,
Secretary of the Interior.

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INTERDEPARTMENTAL REPORT ON ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION FOR QUALITY EDUCATION OF AMERICAN INDIANS

I. Background of Report

PURPOSE

The fundamental question of this report—whether the responsibility for American Indian education should be transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the U.S. Office of Education—was raised in April 1966 at a hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Education considering the extension of programs and services under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89–10) to Indian youngsters enrolled in Federal schools. A request was made to the Secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Health, Education, and Welfare to explore the advisability and feasibility of such a transfer. An interdepartmental committee was appointed under the cochairmanship of Mr. Robert E. Vaughan, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Land Management, Department of the Interior, and Dr. Joseph G. Colemen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Despite the complexities and interrelationships of the many problems facing American Indians, the scope of this study was limited to Indian education.

SUMMARY

Because education is inextricably linked to the other human service functions and because transfer of the education function would result in further fragmentation of the total spectrum of services now afforded American Indians by the Federal Government, the Departments recommend that the Bureau of Indian Affairs should retain the education function at this time, working in close cooperation with the Office of Education to develop a high quality program of Indian education. This recommendation also reflects prevailing Indian opinion.

Wherever the locus of responsibility resides, the Departments believe that the federally run Indian education program should be an exemplary system directed at providing the highest quality education to meet the special needs of Indian people. All resources required to achieve the desired goals should be made available. Accordingly, the Departments have carefully and deliberately compiled, with the assistance of Indian leaders and other knowledgeable persons and groups, a set of recommendations which should be given consideration in any serious effort to improve Indian education.

II. Indian Education

In order to make the best judgment regarding placement of responsibility for Indian education, it is necessary to understand the role of the Federal Government in the education of Indians, the evolution

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of this role through the years, and the present status of Indian education. Perhaps the most descriptive and valid generalization concerning the history of Indian education is that the aims and efforts made to educate Indian people through the years have reflected the prevailing attitudes of the majority of non-Indian people toward the American Indian.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to 1870 most efforts to educate Indians were made by religious groups. Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs was established in 1824 and was transferred from the War Department to the newly created Department of the Interior in 1849, the Federal Government assumed only limited responsibility for Indian education during this period. The national policy toward Indians during this period was one of suppression and isolation on reservations while efforts were exerted by religious groups to Christianize Indians and to teach them farming, homemaking, and the three R's. Because the great majority of Indians did not accept education during this period, these efforts had little impact.

The year 1870 is often cited as the beginning of the reservation period, which has been characterized by varying degrees of Federal paternalism. With the exception of the religious emphasis, the growing role of the Government in Indian education after 1870 was directed toward the same goals as those prevailing during the previous period and with about the same success. The new policy statements of 1889 included the intention to "absorb Indians into our national life." This intent was manifest in education through the practice of separating Indian children from their families and sending them to attend boarding schools.

The appearance of the Meriam report, a survey of Indian social and economic conditions conducted during 1926–28, contributed to a change of attitude toward Indians. Greater emphasis was placed on self-government for Indian tribes, on an improved system of education, and on participation of State and local agencies in Indian affairs.

The period since 1930 has been characterized by gradual assumption of responsibility for the education of Indian children by the States, aided by provision of Federal funds. The pace at which State and local governments have assumed responsibilities for education and other services has engendered fear that the Federal Government may withdraw entirely from its special relationship to Indians; and this fear continues to have a dominant influence on Indian reaction to changes in the extent, nature, and administration of Federal programs.

SINCE 1960

During the period since 1960, Indians have been the beneficiaries of many new Federal programs which have come into being as a result of the increased national awareness of the problems of disadvantaged citizens. Among the agencies administering such programs are the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Economic Development Administration, and the Housing Assistance Administration.

The major thrust of the Bureau's educational program is to provide a high quality education which will prepare Indian children for life in the 20th century. This includes the teaching of communication skills,

vocational training, and the providing of guidance and counseling for cultural adjustment. The Bureau is attempting to attain a goal which would result by the 1970's in most Indian youth graduating from high school and continuing their formal training in colleges or vocational and technical schools. Transfer of responsibility for the education of Indian children to local school districts continues to be one of the objectives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

NEW LEADERSHIP

The current atmosphere for progressive change within the Bureau suggests that efforts will be made to insure improvement in education afforded Indians.

A National Education Advisory Committee on Indian Leadership has been established to assist in the planning and implementation of programs and projects under Public Law 89–10, as well as to advise on all matters pertaining to the education of Indians.

The newly established educational objectives of the BIA are as follows:

1. As many children as possible should be moved out of boarding schools, particularly off-reservation boarding schools, and placed in community schools on the reservation. This is based on the theory that the most effective education takes place when children are educated in their local community and when their parents are involved in educational policy decisions and implementation. In such circumstances, adult and community education take place simultaneously. Furthermore, in a community school setting financial benefits of a school accrue locally. However, it would not be beneficial to make such a move until the local school is prepared to offer education of at least equal quality.
2. Quality education must be stressed in any federally run program. Indian education should be an exemplary system of instruction. All of the teaching technologies available should be brought to bear on the instruction of Indian children.
3. The community action concept should be utilized wherever possible. Kindergarten and Headstart programs should be made available to all Indian children.
4. There should be administrative accountability within the Education Division and the Assistant Commissioner (Education) should have direct line authority over the program (promotions, transfers, etc.).

POPULATION AND ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The Indian population in the United States, estimated to have been more than 800,000 at the end of the 15th century, gradually decreased to about 240,000 at the end of the 19th century. The population has been growing rapidly since that time, and in 1960 there were 524,000 Indians, and an additional 29,000 Eskimos and Aleuts in Alaska, bringing the total to 552,000. At least 380,000 receive some services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Division of Indian Health (HEW's Public Health Service).

Due to the high birth rate during the 1950–60 decade, the number of Indian children of school age has greatly increased. Furthermore, a determined effort has been made during recent years to make educa-

tional opportunities available to all Indian children. Public school enrollment of Indians is higher than ever before; yet, despite the large number of students that have been transferred to local school districts, the number of students attending Bureau schools has grown from 42,000 in 1961 to nearly 50,000 during the current school year. The Bureau now operates 254 schools, 31 fewer than the high of 285 schools in 1959.

BIA FUNDING

For fiscal year 1967, $84.4 million was appropriated for the educational activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and nearly $40 million for construction of schools and related facilities. Of the $84.4 million, $72.2 million is earmarked for Federal school operations. Under the authority of the Johnson-O'Malley Act, $9.5 million is allocated for assistance to public schools: $1.6 million to pay full cost for 2,355 Navajo students in eight "border town" schools; and $7.9 million to assist public schools enrolling some 50,000 Indian students in 17 States. In addition, $2 million is available to provide grants-in-aid to eligible Indian students enrolled in colleges and universities, while $0.7 million has been set aside for adult education activities.

III. Involvement of the U.S. Office of Education in Indian Education

The principal programs of the U.S. Office of Education from which Indians derive direct benefit are those which provide assistance to local school districts enrolling large numbers of students from federally impacted areas. (For the purpose of these acts Indian reservations have been classified as federally impacted areas.) Public Law 81–874 provides financial assistance to such districts for school operation, and Public Law 81–815 provides financial help for school construction. Local school districts annually receive about $14 million of Public Law 81–874 funds and around $3 million of Public Law 81–815 funds based on their enrollment of reservation Indian youngsters.

Under titles I, II, and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89–10) as amended in 1966, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools have obtained about $5.4 million for fiscal year 1967.

Most U.S. Office of Education programs involve grants to State and local educational agencies. It is assumed that large numbers of Indian children in public schools have benefited from services provided through Federal programs such as titles I, II, and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The U.S. Office of Education has recently undertaken a thorough examination of its resources to identify and to help solve the special problems encountered in the education of Indian children.

In the area of research, the U.S. Office of Education has funded nine research projects concerned with Indian education, seven completed and two in progress. The Bureau of Research is exploring the possibility of funding research and development in selected Indian schools. Also, several regional educational laboratories, which identify educational resources of a given region and act as a link between universities and school systems, have indicated an interest in projects

aimed at improvement of education of Indians and other minority groups.

In the area of teacher training, some of the teachers of Indian children have already been involved in summer institutes funded under the National Defense Education Act. Many more opportunities for such training will soon be available.

A data base for ascertaining the statistical impact of educational programs on Indian children, or the numbers affected by specific programs, is largely absent. Such data should be available beginning in July 1967 from the Office of Education for those programs in which Indian children are participating.

IV. Denver Meetings With Indian Leaders and Others

Two meetings were held November 9–12, 1966, in Denver to discuss where responsibility for Indian education should be located within the Federal Government. Lists of those attending these meetings are attached.

Attending the first meeting were 18 Indian tribal chairmen and members of tribal education committees, representing 76 percent of the total enrollment in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and 60 percent of the entire reservation population.

Indian representatives expressed concern about the transfer of education from BIA to the Office of Education. Fearful of "termination" of Federal activities in their behalf, they are generally opposed to the disruption of the traditional relationships which has existed with the Government. They indicated distrust of the fragmentation of Indian services within the Federal Establishment and felt that their welfare would suffer if these functions were further divided between agencies rather than remaining concentrated in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Attending the second meeting were college and university faculty who have conducted research on Indian problems, teachers of Indian children from both BIA and public schools, and others who have been involved in the educational aspects of community action programs. This group agreed that major responsibility for Indian education should remain within the BIA, provided that the BIA work closely with the Office of Education to make available the kinds and amounts of additional resources necessary to accomplish agreed upon objectives.

Participants in the second meeting maintained that Indian education must be viewed in the context of the considerable variation among and within tribes, taking into consideration such differences as levels of economic and social development and educational expectations. They felt that educational programs should recognize the different problems of Indians in Federal and public schools and should consider the readiness of local or State systems to provide quality educational services. They recommended further that local studies be undertaken with the assistance of Indian groups, non-Indian groups, and State and Federal officials; and that Governors of the States involved should call attention to the need for improvement of educational opportunities for Indians in public schools.

The consensus at both meetings was that the BIA should be given time to carry out its new educational program before serious consideration is given to a transfer of the education function from one agency to another.

V. Meeting With Representatives of State Departments of Education

Because of State and local involvement in Indian education, the committee met with representatives designated by the chief State school officers of 15 States with significant Indian populations.

The experience of the several States in Indian education provided the general framework for discussion, with particular emphasis on the willingness and capability of States to exert greater effort in Indian education. Much of the discussion centered on the need for Federal assistance to help accomplish these objectives because of the limited financial resources of local school districts in many Indian areas.

There was no consensus among these representatives concerning the proposed transfer of the education function from BIA to the Office of Education and many stated they did not feel sufficiently informed to express a firm opinion.

VI. Transfer of Indian Health to the Public Health Service

In an attempt to gain further insight into the possible effects of transferring Indian education, members of the Public Health Service were consulted regarding the transfer of Indian health from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to that agency in 1955. In reconstructing that transfer, it appeared that the decision was made quite suddenly, and was not based on the opinions of Indian people to any significant extent.

The Division of Indian Health of the Public Health Service has been able to apply greater resources to the problems of Indian health and to work more independently than was possible previously. Since the transfer, there has been a marked improvement in the state of Indian health. Nevertheless, some of the Indian leaders at the Denver meeting expressed dissatisfaction with health services.

There are basic and significant differences in the circumstances surrounding Indian health and Indian education. There is no counterpart in health to the existing system of State-supported education with well-established relationships between these systems and the U.S. Office of Education. Further, the Public Health Service is experienced in the operation and control of hospitals and other medical facilities, whereas the Office of Education has never operated schools or school systems.

VII. Anticipated Effects of Transferring Indian Education

The effects of transferring responsibility for Indian education from the BIA to the Office of Education must be analyzed in the context of providing improved quality of educational opportunities for Indian children. The committee identified the following significant advantages and disadvantages:

ADVANTAGES OF TRANSFER

1. The quality of Indian education might be expected to increase as a result of the augmentation of significant professional expertise, research capability, and financial resources.
2. A more positive public image of Indian education could result from greater identification with the education profession.

3. The Office of Education would have great incentive to build a model program for the education of Indian youth, particularly since this would be its only direct operational program.

4. A more effective transition of education functions from Federal to State Governments might take place with the more viable relationships which exist between the Office of Education, State departments of education, and local educational agencies.

DISADVANTAGES OF TRANSFER

1. The portion of the Bureau remaining after transfer of the education function might be handicapped, and the quality of remaining services might deteriorate. At present approximately 70 percent of the total BIA budget is allotted to education activity. Because of the intricate dovetailing of funding structure, personnel functions, and other services which has developed over the years, education is closely related to other BIA activities. A transfer of the education function doubtless would result in a period of dislocation.

2. Indian people tend to view a transfer of this nature as an additional step toward termination of Federal responsibility, a policy strongly opposed by most Indians.

3. A transfer of education alone would result in further fragmentation of services which would necessitate Indians dealing with yet another Federal agency. This diffusion of services is viewed as eventually decreasing the measure of total, integrated assistance to Indians, when it would appear more beneficial to be consolidating or in other ways improving the coordination of direct personal service programs.

VIII. Recommendations for Improving Indian Education

The recommendations which follow have resulted from consultations with Indian groups and with specialists in Indian education and related areas, as well as from the deliberations of the committee itself. Recommendations are set forth in two sections. The first deals with those matters which involve policy and administrative decisions which can be effected within the existing system, provided that additional resources are made available. The second section includes those items which require additional legislation.

POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The Bureau of Indian Affairs should retain the education function at this time, working in close cooperation with the Office of Education to develop a high quality program of Indian education.

2. As long as the Federal Government operates schools, the principal official responsible for education should be in a role comparable to that of a superintendent of a major school system, i.e., with full responsibility for the total educational enterprise, including school construction, operation, and maintenance.

3. The Office of Education in HEW should review all its programs to determine how to make these available to the greatest extent possible for the benefit of Indian children enrolled in federally operated schools. In its own programs the Office of Education should exert

influence to insure that resources become and continue to be available for Indian children enrolled in public schools and should urge States to give the same emphasis to Indian children.

4. Education must be viewed as a single, continuing process which ranges from preschool through adulthood. Beginning with preschool experience for all Indian children, the research and development capacity of the appropriate agencies should be strengthened in order to tailor educational programs to the needs of Indian people. Study should be made of the possible application of new educational technologies. Greater attention and support should be given to special education, since there is a high incidence of disability and handicaps among Indian children. Attention should be given to funding experimental programs at universities to assist Indian youth in adjusting to contemporary American society. Consideration should be given to supporting a center for graduate study of the languages, history, and culture of American Indians.

5. Strong support should be given to the BIA objective of moving Indian youngsters out of boarding schools and placing them in community schools on the reservation as soon as this can be done with no reduction in the quality of education.

6. Every effort should be made to encourage Indian parents and tribal leaders to assume increasing interest in and responsibility for the education of Indian children in accordance with the concept of community action. School boards, elected by the community and entrusted with appropriate responsibility for education, should be adopted as standard operating procedure. Specialized training programs should be instituted for board members. Study also should be given to the possibility of making grants directly to Indian groups to administer their own educational systems.

7. Staffing policies and procedures should be reviewed to develop procedures for recruitment and selection to assure employment and retention of the highest quality staff. Positions in education should be alined with the rest of the education profession, e.g., in terms of work year, incentives such as salary, opportunity for continuing education, etc. Consideration should be given to acquiring staff for schools in isolated areas by creating a volunteer or limited assignment category which might increase the likelihood of attracting well-qualified staff committed to working with the Indian child. Programs such as Teacher Corps and VISTA should be fully utilized. The roles of teacher and dormitory aids and other supportive personnel should receive appropriate consideration, particularly as a means of involving the community.

8. A review of vocational education opportunities for Indian young people and adults should be undertaken at both the State and National levels. The most extensive program of vocational education possible should be available to Indians, beginning at the high school level, and should be closely tied to job availability and family mobility. Every Indian who completes high school should have an opportunity for college or additional vocational training.

9. Efforts should be accelerated with State departments of education and local school districts to help them prepare to assume increased responsibility for the education of Indian children currently enrolled in BIA schools, in accordance with the BIA's policy of movement toward the public school system.

10. The U.S. Office of Education and the BIA should stimulate local school districts to take a more active part in bringing Indian children into their schools. Such a program will require in each community, planning meetings involving Indians, their non-Indian neighbors, local school officials, and representatives of State and Federal Governments. Integrated education should be encouraged. In many cases, however, this will be impossible because of extreme physical isolation.

11. A comprehensive study of the educational needs of Indians and the effectiveness of present programs—Federal, State, and local—in meeting these needs should be undertaken.

12. Ways should be explored to encourage development of junior or community colleges on or near the larger reservations to facilitate opportunities for larger numbers of Indian children to receive higher education. A central criterion in establishing such a school should be attendance by non-Indian as well as Indian children.

LEGISLATION

13. The BIA authorization for titles I, II, and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act should be extended beyond the present expiration date of June 30, 1967, and made consistent with the timing of the balance of the act.

14. Public Law 81–815 should be amended to liberalize the provision for construction of public school facilities in areas with concentrations of Indian children.

15. Consideration should be given to transferring the Johnson-O'Malley program from the BIA to the Office of Education. This program, which provides funds for supplementary services for Indian children enrolled in public schools, bears a direct relationship to programs administered by the Office of Education. JOM assistance being provided at present consists of special services such as those under title I of Public Law 89–10, and more general assistance such

as that provided under Public Law 81–874 for impact areas. Closer coordination of all these programs should increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Respectfully submitted,
Department of the Interior:

ROBERT E. VAUGHAN,
Deputy Assistant Secretary.

JAMES E. OFFICER,
Associate Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

DR. CARL L. MARBURGER,
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MEETING ON INDIAN EDUCATION, DENVER

NOVEMBER 9–10, 1966

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NOVEMBER 11-12, 1966

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